

# CITY of TORRANCE VOLUNTEER NEWSLETTER

Spring 2012

## Spring Events



**Meet a Torrance Hero:**  
Louis Zamperini will be appearing at the Toyota Auto Museum on Saturday April 28th as the Torrance Public Library Foundations caps on the April celebration of "One Book, One City." Tickets are \$25.00 and can be purchased by calling (310) 651-5230.

*"One Book, One City" is a citywide program generously sponsored by the Torrance Public Library Foundation. During the month of April, the community is encouraged to read Unbroken: A World War II Story of Survival, Resilience,*

*and Redemption by Laura Hillenbrand and join us for community book discussions and other free events (see below). For more information go to <http://www.torranceca.gov/Library/23886.htm>*



### Spring Cleaning:

In April, the Centennial Committee is organizing a series of city-wide clean-ups around the City of Torrance. For a complete list of locations go to <http://www.torrancecentennial.org/events/events->

[schedule-2011-2012](#) and click on your favorite location for more information on how to volunteer.

### Armed Forces Day:

Torrance will celebrate the 53rd Annual Armed Forces Day during the weekend of May 18-20. The Parade, the highlight of the event, will be held on Saturday, May 19th. The United States Air Force is the honored branch in this year's parade, but we hope that you will join us in celebrating the service and sacrifice of all our armed forces during this special weekend. For

more information about the 53rd Annual Armed Forces Day, see our website, <http://www.torranceca.gov/ArmedForcesDay.htm>

### State of the City:

Don't miss Mayor Scotto's annual address sponsored by the Torrance Chamber of Commerce. The event will be held on Thursday, May 24th at 11:30 a.m. For more information, or to reserve your seat (\$35.00) call 310-543-3113. Look for re-broadcasts of the Mayor's speech on Torrance Citi-cable channel 3.

## Volunteers Needed



### Creative volunteer needed at the Senior Center:

If you have a background in Arts and Crafts and want to use your skills to brighten up the Senior Center, please apply at <https://www.volgistics.com/ex/portal.dll/ap?AP=671916624> and choose "Senior Center" as your assignment preference.



**Rose Garden Volunteers:**  
Spring is the season when roses start blooming. If you

enjoy gardening, consider volunteering at the Rose Garden. Not only does your service provide beauty to all who pass the Civic Center Rose Garden, but you get to keep the blooms from the bush that you "adopt." Apply at <https://www.volgistics.com/ex/portal.dll/ap?AP=671916624> and choose "Rose Garden" as your assignment preference

### Torrance Art Museum:

Gotta have Art? Get your regular dose of Art as a volunteer at the Torrance Art Museum. Volunteers are needed to greet guests and act as docents during

exhibits. Apply at <https://www.volgistics.com/ex/portal.dll/ap?AP=671916624> and choose, "Torrance Art Museum" as your assignment preference.



### Be a part of Torrance's Living Legacy:

The Torrance Library needs volunteers ages 16 years and older to help collect

and preserve the memories of local military veterans. Volunteer interviewers and transcribers will be trained by an instructor from the Southern California Southwest Oral History Association.

Volunteers will be trained on Saturday, May 5, 2012 from 12:30 pm to 5 pm. Katy Geissert Civic Center Library Community Room 3301 Torrance Blvd. Torrance, CA 90503

For more information on the Living Legacies program, please call 310-618-5950.

**If you have questions regarding the volunteer program, we welcome your call. Contact us at (310) 618-2967.**



## AARP Volunteer Whit Walter

Written by Jennifer Hagihara

*Since 1968, the Tax-Aide AARP Foundation and the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) have been helping millions of taxpayers across the nation. Now with tax season in full swing, Torrance has reopened the Tax-Aide Program for low to middle income families.*

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"I've been volunteering here for 19 years but the program has been here for a lot longer," Whit Walter, the volunteer coordinator, said. "We used to be in the lobby of the Plunge before moving in to this new location."

The new location is located on El Prado Avenue in downtown Torrance where Walter and other volunteers help prepare their "clients" taxes while answering any questions they might have for free.

Walter is the coordinator for the Torrance and South Bay areas which includes Redondo Beach, Manhattan Beach, and Palos Verdes. Together there are 60 volunteers who help seniors 60 and older or people with low to moderate incomes prepare their taxes. And although there is a target audience, the program will take anyone who walks through their doors.

"Last year we did about 2,000 returns in the South Bay area," Walter said. "There's a satisfaction for helping people. I enjoy it."

Senior citizen Anda Luters always did her own taxes before finding this program about six years ago through



an advertisement at the Katy Geissert Library.

"I've learned a lot more about filing after coming here," Luters said. "They can tell you exactly what you owe and you can pay it knowing that you're not overpaying. I think it's wonderful. Don't stop this program."

People who are interested in volunteering for the program don't need to be accountants or CPA's. But Walter said that most of those who volunteer are number people, including himself who worked on computers before retiring. And every volunteer needs to go through one week of training in January to learn if the IRS implemented new rules.

"We get about eight new people a year who want to volunteer," Walter said. "The following year about six or seven stay and when they stay it's forever."

The program is opened in Torrance five days a week and in other locations in the South Bay area, one day a week. The office opens February 1 till April 13 and is available for walk-ins only.

## **The City of Torrance Needs You!**

The Torrance City Council will be appointing several new Commissioners at the meeting scheduled for May 22, 2012.

Listening to the voices of the Torrance community and making recommendations to the City Council in their area of expertise is what makes the Commissions a vital component of local government. To serve as a Commissioner, you must be a Torrance resident and you must enroll in a Commissioner Certification Training class.

This training class educates applicants on the role of Commissioners, which includes open meeting laws, ethics, and municipal finance. The next training certification class will be held on May 9th at the Nakano Theatre at 6:00 p.m. If you are interested in





## Commissioner Harvey Horwich Retires after 32 years

Written by Jennifer Hagihara

*"You'll always find time for what you want to do," Harvey Horwich said. "You just have to do it."*

With this simple yet powerful thought, Horwich is a man who seems to bend time itself. The 83-year-old began his 32 year volunteer career with the loving act of becoming involved with his kid's activities. In turn, this spawned a lifetime of dedication to make a difference and help others.

One of the first places he sought to volunteer for was the Parks and Recreation Commission.

"At that time, my son was involved with Little League," Horwich said. "The Parks and Recreation Commission were helpful in finding places to play. Torrance has well over 30 parks now. It's marvelous."

There are two general purposes for commissioners. Citizens need someone to talk to about problems directly related to parks, buildings, property, etc. and look up to the commissioners to be their voice. Second, the commissioners act as a liaison between the public and city council so that the board members won't be bombarded with inquiries.

attending this training, contact the City Clerk's office at (310) 618-2870 to reserve your seat.

Typically, Commissions meet once a month; and commissioners receive a \$10.00 per diem for attending each meeting. But even more valuable is the experience of becoming an integral part of city government.

In addition to the Parks and Recreation Commission, Horwich also became part of the Planning Commission where he remained for ten years up until January of 2011. This commission is concerned with decisions regarding the growth of the community such as building or remodeling homes or businesses in Torrance.

When Horwich first moved from Gardena to Torrance in 1959, he happened to buy the house next door to a gentleman who later became a member of the City Council.

"He thought I'd be good on the Planning Commission and asked if I would be interested," Horwich said. "I've been on the Parks and Recreation for ten years and was ready to do something else. The rest is history."

Although Horwich enjoyed his time on the Parks and Recreation Commission, he thoroughly enjoyed his time on the Planning Commission where he learned the developments of the city.

In addition to his two commissions, Horwich has also been involved with

Special Olympics, became a member of the Torrance School Financial Advisory Board, PTA, Boy Scouts of America, and became appointed as Council member from December 1998 to March 2000 to fill the seat of Councilman George Nakano.

The City Council honored Horwich for his years of service to the community in front of 60-70 people, including Horwich's family. The mayor gave his speech of gratitude and asked Horwich if he wanted to say anything.

"I replied with how honored I was and how I enjoyed every minute of it," Horwich said. "I introduced my wife and said none of this would have been possible without her support because I was gone an awful lot. She not only understood but encouraged me and we've been married 63 years."

Horwich believes a person can find the time to volunteer with the city or at a school if they want to.

"There's always a place for volunteers," Horwich said. "There's always some way you can do it. Sometimes you have to push yourselves to be accepted. It's all well-worth it in the end."



## Department Highlight



### Volunteers at the Torrance Police Department

Written by Jennifer Hagihara

The Torrance Police Department (TPD) has about 30 volunteers who come in during the week and help with recurring or non-recurring duties. Recurring jobs are scheduled on a weekly basis for a few hours or more. They include supporting roles in the Crime Analysis, Motor Transport, and Traffic departments. Non-recurring duties occur every so often. These include events such as the Armed Forces Day Parade, the Special Olympics, Dog Licensing, and Relay for Life.

"The number one area where there's a need for volunteers is in the Records Department," Keith Montoya, a volunteer coordinator for 3½ years at TPD, said. "It's a 24/7 operation where volunteers do some scanning, filing and administrative chores. It's an important job."

The police department understands the hard work and dedication its volunteers put into their specific jobs and express their gratitude often in person and through the four meetings a year.

Two business meetings are conducted each year where a variety of subjects are presented and discussed. During these meetings, new volunteers are introduced and welcomed into the department. Last year, a guest speaker talked to volunteers about being a Forensic Identification Specialist and at a recent meeting, the department talked about the new Podcast and other electronic media communications available online.

In April, during National Volunteer Week the department sponsors a nice meal and announces the volunteer of the year. Another meeting is held in December called "Holiday Potluck Dinner" where prizes and awards are given out.

"The volunteers are a very nice group of people and although we don't see each other at our specific jobs, we come together at special meetings and events," Montoya said. "We appreciate each other and hear what each person is doing to support the TPD. It's very beneficial for all of us."

If you are interested in volunteering at the Torrance Police Department, check their website at <http://www.torranceca.gov/TPD/7193.htm> to see if they are recruiting volunteers. Be aware that volunteering at the Torrance Police Department requires service in a highly sensitive environment and prospective volunteers are subject to a thorough background check. For more information about the Torrance Police Department Volunteer program, call the Community Affairs Bureau at 310-618-5735.

## About Your City



### Planning for the Torrance Transit Park and Ride Regional Terminal is Underway

At the City Council Meeting held on September 1, 2009, the Council voted unanimously to approve the purchase of a 15 acre parcel located at 465 Crenshaw Boulevard. At the time of the purchase, the City Council agreed that it was an opportune investment that would allow the City to develop a regional transportation center with potential connectivity to the Metro Green Line.

Three years later, the City Council's Transportation Committee is conducting a series of meetings to consider layout and design of a new 5 acre multi-modal center to replace the Del Amo Transit Center, which was closed in 2004.

Funding for the \$21 million facility is financed from State Proposition 1B Bond funding (\$2.5 million), Measure R Local Return funding (\$18.1 million) and City funds (\$400,000). Proposition 1B was approved by the voters of California in November of 2007 to provide congestion relief and greater connectivity. Measure R, a half cent sales tax approved by Los Angeles County voters in November of 2008, dedicates more than \$900 million over the next three decades to improve freeways and facilities projects in the South Bay.

This state of the art facility will provide major benefits to the Torrance Community including:

- A hub for local transit systems (Torrance Transit, Gardena Transit, Beach Cities Transit, Metro, Park and Ride LAX)
- Easy access to major transportation corridors ( 110 & 405) utilizing High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lanes
- Adjacent to Metro owned rail line, allowing for extension of Green Line to Torrance

Amenities are expected to include: a "kiss and ride" drop-off; state of the art passenger information and kiosks; level boarding platforms for transit vehicles, enhanced shelters, fare vending machines, and fueling for alternative vehicles.

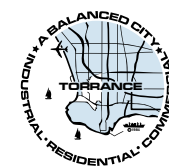
The City is projecting the center to be completed in 2014. If you want to find out more about how the Transit Center can enhance your future transportation opportunities, check the Torrance Transit webpage devoted to the project at

<http://www.torranceca.gov/120.htm>

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